

Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs



Vet News: Week of March 13, 2014

What's New This Week:

1. Special Events
2. News & Announcements
3. Upcoming Events/Meetings
4. Resources FYI

ADVA ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fayetteville Home Seeking Council Members

Administrators at the Arkansas State Veterans Home in Fayetteville are seeking membership for a Family Council to serve the home and its residents. The council will elect leadership and provide input and help provide support for staff, residents and family of residents. For more information, contact Kriss Schaffer at Kriss.Schaffer@arkansas.gov or call him at (479) 695-0153.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Arkansas Run for the Fallen

On March 14-16, 2014, in an apolitical reflection of remembrance, a team of runners will complete a 140-mile run to honor every Arkansas service member killed in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

Registration is now open for the 5k. On Sunday, March 16, after the core run team crosses the bridge into Little Rock, the public is invited to join them as they continue towards the Capitol. If you know of anyone who may be a runner and wants to participate they can go [here](#) to register.

This final 5k is not a race. There are no timing chips and no winners. Rather, it is an opportunity for people to come together to show their support for the fallen and run together as a team to show that support. If you are not a runner, please consider joining us at the state Capitol for the closing ceremony at 2:30 p.m.

Registration is \$25. For more information, go to <http://www.arkansasrunforthefallen.org/index.php>

Outdoor Concert Planned at MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History

On Tuesday, April 1, at 6:30 p.m., the MacArthur Museum of Arkansas History will present a free outdoor concert by Starlifter, a component of the United States Air Force Band of Mid-America.

This seven-piece group of talented musicians performs in virtually every musical idiom, from Rock and Pop to Jazz and Country, to great contemporary and traditional patriotic songs. They feature the best in popular music from the 1970's to the most current sounds at the top of today's charts.

The United States Air Force Band of Mid-America is the musical ambassador of the Air Mobility Command. Formerly known as the Air Force Band of Mid-America, the Military Airlift Command Band, and then as the AMC Band of Mid-America, the United States Air Force Band of Mid-America was established in 1942 at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri. In 1960, the Band began working from its present home at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, as the principal representative of the Military Air Transport Service and the Military Airlift Command, both predecessors of the Air Mobility Command. In any given year, the United States Air Force Band of Mid-America and its component units perform more than 400 engagements for more than 1 million people.

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Event Set April 5

Make plans to attend Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day at the Jacksonville Museum of Military History on April 5. Events include free admission to the museum, a parade, honor and remembrance ceremony. And a dinner will be provided on the grounds for those who **RSVP by March 28**.

Participants are needed for the Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Parade. School groups, church groups, civic organizations, commercial businesses, dance troops, marching bands, and pageant winners all are invited to attend. Your organization doesn't have to be military related to be in the parade. For more information, to RSVP for dinner, registration forms and a schedule of events, log onto <http://www.jaxmilitarymuseum.org/whvv.html> or call (501) 241-1943.

Military Spouse Appreciation Bazaar Looking for Entries

In honor of Military Spouse Day, Little Rock Air Force Base will host a Military Spouse Appreciation Bazaar on May 9 from 5-8 p.m. at the LRAFB Outdoor Warfit Track and we need your help!

Organizers are looking for individuals or businesses who would like to showcase their products or services at the bazaar. Everyone is welcome to bring samples, giveaways, business cards and demonstrations to showcase their product or service.

Entry for these participants is FREE. However, point of sale transactions are not permitted at the bazaar, but each business will be provided a free table and chairs.

This event is open to any and all who would like to participate; including retirees who have businesses and Chamber/community members who provide services/products/etc.

If you would like to participate, contact Kori-Ann Ramirez with the Airman and Family Readiness Center (501)987-2667. Registration will close May 1.

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Expeditionary Medal Presented to Pine Bluff Veteran



Arkansas Senator John Boozman's state director for military and Veterans affairs, retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Steve Gray recently presented the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal to Peter Smykla of Pine Bluff.

Smykla earned the award while serving as a Cryptographer for the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) Taiwan from November 1956 through December 1957. The award was authorized by Executive Order 10977 on Dec. 4, 1961, and made retroactive; however, Smykla was discharged from the U.S. Army in December 1957

and never received it. Senator Boozman and Lt. Col Gray were instrumental in having it approved on Jan. 23, 2014, by the U.S. Army Human Resources Command, Awards and Decorations Branch.

Lt. Gray is seen pinning on the medal in this photo courtesy of Mike Adam, while retired Chief Warrant Stu Soffer reads the citation and Sylvia Smykla proudly watches the ceremony witnessed by over 150 attendees at the Jefferson County Lincoln-Reagan Dinner at the Pine Bluff Country Club.

LRAFB Retirees Breakfast Time Change

The retirees breakfast dates have been changed to the third Friday of each month.

VA Mobile Units on the Move to Assist Veterans

Veterans in several rural communities across the state of Arkansas will have access to the Mobile Vet Center (MVC). Mobile Vet Centers, operated by VA's Readjustment Counseling Service, provide nonmedical readjustment counseling and outreach to combat veterans and their families, addressing the social and economic dimensions of post-war needs.

Throughout March, MVC 850 will make stops as indicated below between the hours of 10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. each day:

Friday, March 14, 2014	322 Brownsville Loop, Lonoke (Lonoke Co), AR 72086
Tuesday, March 18, 2014	2730 Northwest Avenue, El Dorado (Union Co), AR 71730
Wednesday, March 19, 2014	485 E Main Street, Hampton (Calhoun Co), AR 71744
Thursday, March 20, 2014	101 East Cedar Street, Warren (Bradley Co), AR 71671
Friday, March 21, 2014	2700 South Shackleford Road, Little Rock (Pulaski Co), AR 72205
Tuesday, March 25, 2014	406 East 22nd Street, Stuttgart (Arkansas Co), AR 72160
Wednesday, March 26, 2014	20 Magnolia Street, Rison (Cleveland Co), AR 71665
Thursday, March 27, 2014	1123 Highway 79 167, Fordyce (Dallas Co), AR 71742
Friday, March 28, 2014	525 Skyline Drive, Conway (Faulkner Co), AR 72032

Mobile Vet Centers are among VA's premier, front-line outreach resources designed to interact with Veterans in rural communities, at community events, and on special occasions. As an integral part of the Vet Center system, MVC's offer veterans information on topics such as individual and group readjustment counseling, military sexual trauma, marital and family counseling, VA benefits, and community education. MVC 850 is Fayetteville-based and provides service coverage throughout the majority of Arkansas.

Veterans and family members seeking information about Vet Center or other Department of Veterans Affairs services can visit the Mobile Vet Center on a walk-in basis during this important state-wide outreach effort.

As is often the case in many rural areas wherein VA facilities are not readily available or there is limited access to services, the MVC affords Veterans an opportunity to engage in face-to-face dialog with a VA representative within the local community.

Significant, too, is that the Mobile Vet Center staff respect the privacy of all Veterans and family members, maintaining all information in strictest confidence. Staff will communicate or transfer no information to any third party or agency without the express, written consent of the individual veteran except in circumstances wherein such communication is absolutely necessary to avert a crisis situation.

For more information, contact Miles Brown, CAVHS Public Affairs Officer, (501) 257-5393 or vhalitpublicaffairs@va.gov.

**** *To add an event, email details to kelly.ferguson@arkansas.gov* ****

UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

March 14-16

Arkansas Run for the Fallen; www.arkansasrunforthefallen.org

March 29

Michael Vann Johnson Jr. American Legion Post 74 hosts annual Tribute to Fallen Heroes ceremony; 11 a.m.; Sherwood Forest; nationally renowned speaker and author Walter Carter

Tucker is honored guest; Call 501-374-9002 or contact R.D. Kinsey, Post Commander @ 501-247-4765 or rdk52@hotmail.com.

April 1

Starlifter Outdoor concert; 6:30 p.m.; behind the MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History,

April 5

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day; 9-6 p.m.; Jacksonville Museum of Military History.

April 14

Veterans Service Officer quarterly meeting, 10-11 a.m., Veterans Healthcare System of the Ozarks, Director's Conference Room, Bldg. 4, Fayetteville

April 15

Arkansas Veterans Commission Regular Meeting; 10 a.m.; Fayetteville Veterans Home

April 21

The Freedom Golf Scramble at Diamante CC in Hot Springs Village. Sponsors and teams register at www.ArkansasFreedomFund.org.

May 3

LRAFB Retiree Appreciation Day; Hangar 1080

May 7

Women Veterans Health Fair; 1- 3 p.m.; Veterans Healthcare System of the Ozarks Auditorium, Bldg. 3, Fayetteville

May 9

Military Spouse Appreciation Bazaar; 5-8 p.m.; LRAFB Outdoor Warfit Track

May 16-18

Hitting for Heroes Softball Tournament at Bishop Park in Bryant. Info at www.ArkansasFreedomFund.org

May 26

State of Arkansas Memorial Day Ceremony; 10 a.m.; Arkansas State Veterans Cemetery at North Little Rock

May 30

Golf Scramble for AFF Hunting Program. Hot Springs CC. Hot Springs. Sponsors and teams register at www.ArkansasFreedomFund.org.

RESOURCES FYI

Military OneSource

Confidential services, including non-medical counseling and specialty consultations, are available through Military OneSource. Eligible individuals may receive confidential services at no cost.

[Operation Homefront](#)

Operation Homefront assists military families during difficult financial times by providing food assistance, auto and home repair, vision care, travel and transportation, moving assistance, essential home items, and financial assistance.

[ARVets](#)

The mission of ARVets is to enhance the overall quality of life for military personnel, veterans and their families by improving access to resources and strengthening support systems through all phases of the military life cycle. ARVets will proactively offer more innovative ideas and methods to deliver services and focus on a grassroots case-management approach.

[Arkansas Freedom Fund](#)

The Arkansas Freedom Fund (AFF) a Nonprofit, Veteran's 501c3 that serves, supports and benefits military personnel, veterans, wounded warriors and their families. The primary focus of the organization is rehabilitative recreational outdoor activities. Many military personnel and Veterans need opportunities to get out and do physical activities, experience nature, connect with others that have similar backgrounds and help each other connect with civilian activities outside of a military or medical construct. Cycling, Golfing, Fishing and Hunting programs are adapted to meet the requirements of the Veteran, regardless of physical and mental ability or disability.

[ASPIRE](#)

The organization seeks to assist lower income surviving military spouses, and caregivers of disabled military veterans achieve the educational and related quality of life goals essential to their sustained social and economic well-being. ASPIRE accomplishes this mission through a carefully structured program of economic support and life skills counseling tailored to the individual needs of each recipient and their families with the goal of getting them off of government assistance permanently and empowering them to continue their lives and support their families independently.

[TaxHelp.org](#)

This tax guide helps military personnel better understand how they should be filing taxes, what tax deductions and extensions they are eligible for, and what benefits their dependents and spouses are allowed. Veterans will also find their state's VA office and contact information to determine if there are unique state tax benefits.

[Hero 2 Hired](#)

Hero2Hired (H2H) was created to make it easy for Reserve Component service members to connect to and find jobs with military-friendly companies. H2H also offers career exploration tools, military-to-civilian skills translations, education and training resources, as well as a mobile app. Support for H2H is provided through the Department of Defense's Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program.

[Show Your Stripes](#)

iHeartRadio's Show Your Stripes is a community initiative launched by Clear Channel, the media and entertainment company in America with the largest reach, to generate awareness around the issue of veteran unemployment, encourage businesses to hire skilled veterans and help those transitioning out of the military find jobs. With over \$75 million in radio, digital and out-of-home resources dedicated to this initiative in just one year, iHeartRadio's Show Your Stripes is the single largest public service campaign in Clear Channel's history.

[ESGR](#)

ESGR, a Department of Defense office, was established in 1972 to promote cooperation and understanding between Reserve Component Service members and their civilian employers and to assist in the resolution of conflicts arising from an employee's military commitment. ESGR is supported by a network of more than 4,900 volunteers in 54 committees located across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam-CNMI, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

[Vet Tix](#)

Vet Tix is a nationally recognized 501c3 Veterans Support Organization whose mission is to "give something to those who gave." Vet Tix teams up with major sports teams, leagues, promoters, organizations, companies, venues and everyday event ticket holders to provide free (and discounted) tickets to the more than 26 million active military, Veterans and their families.

ADVA Vet News is a weekly email update providing information of interest to Service Officers and Veterans. Information has been provided from a variety of sources and does not necessarily constitute an opinion or position by ADVA.

A service of the [Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs](#), Public Information Department, 2200 Ft. Roots Dr. Bldg. 65, Rm. 119, N. Little Rock, AR 72114

This message was sent to members of the Arkansas Veterans' Commission, the Arkansas Veterans' Coalition, ADVA Service Officers, and County Veterans Services Officers mailing lists. Click [HERE](#) to be removed. Type "Remove Me" in the subject line.

